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Reading Performance Indicators for BRI: Beginning Reading Instruction

The three Performance Indicators chart the route that BRI Instruction takes to deliver initial reading expertise – the capability of reading text, containing known code, with an understanding equal to that were the communication spoken. The PIs constitute a measurement scale in the tradition extending back to the father of educational and psychological testing, Alfred Binet. The results of each of Binet’s tests were reported in terms of descriptive categories grounded in transparent observations rather than in terms of statistical “scores”. The scale is such that an individual will top out at a given point and be unable to handle matters at any further point.

Relatives of the scale are all transparent measuring devices in everyday use that are coupled directly to the phenomena of interest: examples are callipers used to measure thickness and distances; measuring spoons and cups; and thermometers. The closest direct analogue to the PIs is the Snellen Eye Chart used by optical specialists to match visual performance to eyeglass specifications.

Rather than spectacles, the PIs can be used to match children to the starting point for BRI instruction which best utilizes whatever reading assets a child has acquired through previous instruction and to demonstrate measurable progress after the completion of each set.

Interpretation of Initial Performance

The interpretation of performance is a matter of “calibration” rather than “scoring”. If a child reads the text fluently with no errors, that’s a “go.”

If a child cannot read the passage or struggles with it, that’s a “no-go” and an indication to move down at least one PI.

But what about *some* errors? That depends upon the kind of errors and what the child does after making the error. If the child self-corrects and maintains the continuity of the communication – even if skipping a word, or stumbling infrequently, that’s a “go”.

If the child loses continuity and does not recover easily, or reads so haltingly that continuity is unduly interrupted, that’s a “no-go.” If in doubt, it is best to interpret the performance conservatively, and consider the next lower PI as the determiner.

Typically, struggling readers will have difficulty handling the first one or two PIs. Conservative placement builds the child’s confidence that “I CAN READ” and also ensures that the letter/sound correspondences are firmly consolidated as a basis for building further expertise.



Performance Indicator 1 (BRI Set 1)

I am Nan !

See me, Mat.

Mit sits in it, Sis.

Will sees a man sit.

Ann sat on this and that.

Is that Nan in the mess, Nat?

When will we meet Sid?

She meets Ed with fun feet.

What fits Nell well?

Yes, I see them run.

Pretend Words

mun fam Deets res thith



Performance Indicator 2 (BRI Set 2)

No, let the sheets fill with sand!

Sell the mud if it feels wet.

That fat rat is not sad!

He set a fish on the net.

Then Mat ran to the hill with nuts.

Was that a fan with the weed hats?

Bat the ball into his hands.

Who met all the bad men?

“Hit this bell to win a wish,” said Bill.

Sid has also had a bus.

Ben hid ants in that bed.

Pretend Words

tish bants mest rand daths



Performance Indicator 3 (BRI Set 3)

I'll go and help her!

She must get that drum.

Let's play here on the path.

Dash stops to see the tree.

Are you out of the den?

We'll swim from his ship.

Tip can keep this mask.

Now that Ruff went, I'm glad.

Put wet rocks down on the grass.

Pretend Words

relps smick kwim fubb jown

